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Friend, mistress, sister ; and when death's release
Shall call my spirit to another birth,
Would that I might thus lightly lapse away,
Alone, — by moonlight, — in a Gondola."

— Vol. II. pp. 44, 45.

Some of these lines are very sweet, and we can entirely sympathize in this relish for the luxury of the gondola. But the general strain and expression is got up ; it is contortion without inspiration, and so wholly make-believe, that it is clear, from the closing lines, the poet did not perceive whether he were alone or in company. In the first lines quoted we also see how his very common fault, of seeking for effect by unusual expression, leads to far-fetched and questionable terms ; "cradler of pleasures," "bosomer of the mind," "enfolder of feelings," are not very happy designations for a boat. So, too, in an address to a child of nine years, he gives thanks, that the "unnatural bondage of a school" has not

"Blasphemed the Godhead of thy vernal years ;"
which may be very strong, but it is very bad.

We wish that we could speak with more unqualified praise of a book, which has left so favorable an impression of the character of its author. Perhaps we are too insensible to its beauties, and too alive to its faults. If so, we shall not prevent its finding admirers, while we shall feel, that we have only discharged a duty in pointing out blemishes, which some might take for beauties, and doing what we may to put a stop to errors sanctioned by such an example.

ART. IV. — *Algic Researches, comprising Inquiries respecting the Mental Characteristics of the North American Indians. First Series. Indian Tales and Legends.* In Two Volumes. By HENRY ROWE SCHOOLCRAFT, Author of a Narrative Journal of Travels to the Sources of the Mississippi ; Travels in the Central Portions of the Mississippi Valley ; An Expedition to Itasca Lake, &c. New York : Harper & Brothers. 12mo. pp. 248 and 244.

SEVERAL years since, a few gentlemen of intelligence in the Northwest associated themselves for the purpose of col-

lecting facts relating to the Indian character, condition, &c., and putting them into a shape to be preserved. The first suggestion of this society came, we believe, from Mr. H. R. Schoolcraft, who was very properly placed at the head of it, and who gave the name, "Algic," by which it was known,—a term formed from the Indian word from which Alleghany is taken, and denoting "all that family of tribes, which, about A. D. 1600, was spread out, with local exceptions, along the Atlantic, between Pamlico Sound and the Gulf of the St. Lawrence, extending northwest to the Missinipi of Hudson's Bay, and west to the Mississippi." Mr. Schoolcraft at once set himself at work to fulfil the purpose for which this society was formed, or rather, began to arrange his past labors, and proceeded to further researches with new zeal. We have not heard what was done by others. It is probable, that Mr. Schoolcraft alone has produced any useful result, though other members may have encouraged his zeal, and urged on his progress.

In the "General Considerations," prefixed to the volumes, of which the foregoing is the title, Mr. Schoolcraft remarks, upon the collections he has made respecting the Indians, that "materials exist" (that is, have been collected by him) "for separate observations on their oral traditions, fictitious and historical; their hieroglyphics, music, and poetry; and the grammatical structure of the languages, their principles of combination, and the actual state of their vocabulary." Out of these materials he has chosen, for present publication, the "Oral Tales," which form a "First Series" of his "Algic Researches." When the other series are to appear, "will depend," Mr. Schoolcraft says, "upon the interest manifested by the public in the subject, and the leisure and health necessary to the examination of a mass of original papers, the accumulation of nearly twenty years." That this interest will be manifested, we not only hope, but believe. We cannot admit, that the opportunity to acquire such valuable stores of information on the "mythology, distinctive opinions, and intellectual character" of the Indians, is likely to be lost through lukewarmness, or want of proper patronage, on the part of the reading public. These interesting points relate to a race, which, from being the sole possessors of the Western hemisphere,—the new world which Columbus discovered and opened to the old,—

has dwindled into fractions of people, fast becoming less and less, with a principle of decay mingled in their institutions, or pervading their customs, which threatens them, in spite of all the efforts of philanthropy and conservative legislation, with extinction in the course of a few generations. However we may regard the causes which have produced this result, and wherever we may incline to fix the responsibility of having put them in operation, we shall not the less value all memorials that give us an insight into the habits and opinions of this fated race. In the same degree that we deplore the hard destiny that is hunting it down, and feel a sorrowful conviction that it is inevitable, we shall prize all evidences that are recorded to assist us, and those who may come after us, in judging of them in these respects.

No traveller has ever been among the Indians without gathering up something, which he considered illustrative of their customs, languages, or history, well knowing that the public curiosity was awake to all such sketches ; that they dashed a spice into his pages. Thus far we have had but small means to determine the authenticity of these accounts. They were often discredited by disagreement, but we had no standard by which we could determine the right. In the works which Mr. Schoolcraft now gives to the public, and those which are to follow, we may flatter ourselves, that this standard is likely to be set up. His advantages have been great, and almost peculiar. Before he became fixed among the Indians in an official capacity, he had passed through their wide-spread country in many and various directions, as his " Travels " show. He had thus far seen them under all the aspects which present themselves to the eye of ordinary travellers. His books of travels all contain much information relative to the tribes he saw ; but this information was necessarily superficial, excepting as to externals, numbers, &c. In this respect he was like his predecessors, excepting, perhaps, that he did not profess to have seen so much as they.

It is well known to all who have had even a slight acquaintance with the Indians, that they are wrapped up in a close reserve before most of the whites, — all of them, with whom they have not become familiarized by long intercourse. Rapid observers, such as all travellers are, see little except this assumed exterior, which is intended to conceal, perhaps

to mislead. And it is most naturally impenetrable in proportion to the inquisitiveness which assails it. Hence such persons catch only views of the surface, and are left to conjecture as to all beneath. These conjectures, as might be expected, have been wild and jarring. Still, they were all, or nearly all, we were likely to have. It was scarcely probable, that any intelligent and well-educated man would be among the Indians for a series of years, upon a footing of unreserved intimacy, making the study of their character a constant object of zealous and benevolent pursuit. The sacrifice appeared to be such as very few would be willing to make. But Mr. Schoolcraft has been in that position ; with what qualifications to improve it, the public well know.

Soon after his return from his travels with Governor Cass, in 1820, Mr. Schoolcraft determined to fix himself on the verge of the Northwest settlements, whence he might leisurely survey the grounds over which he had necessarily been hurried by the limits of a summer's tour, and where he might also have the Indian constantly under his eye, in all his varieties of character and condition. Accordingly he accepted an appointment under the government in the Indian Department, which established him over a large area as Superintendent of the Indians, having paternal relations with them, which must lead, in due course of time, to circumstances of intimacy, most favorable to the designs of a liberal curiosity. But this was not the chief advantage which Mr. Schoolcraft enjoyed. In this he might have been only on a footing with many of his contemporaries or predecessors, except in his literary tastes, and his fondness for investigation. At the Sault Ste. Marie, which was his station, Mr. Schoolcraft found an Irish gentleman, who had early obeyed the impulse of an adventurous spirit, and left his native country to embark in the fur-trade, a calling, which, at that time, held out strong inducements to all who were to be lured by a love of novel enterprise, as well as by a promise of easily gotten wealth. Mr. Johnson, while yet a young man, had established himself at the Sault as a fur-trader ; thence making excursions, at proper seasons, into the regions of Lake Superior. Thus he became acquainted with one of the principal chiefs of that region, whose daughter he married, as has been detailed by Mrs. Jameson, in her recent Ram-

bles among the "Upper Lakes." The eldest daughter by this marriage, at a suitable age, was taken home to Ireland by her father to be educated, where she found a kind and efficient patronage in several ladies of rank, who took delight in watching the effect of cultivation on an exotic from so remote a region. She was brought back by her father to her distant home, with every intellectual accomplishment which an apt mind could acquire in the course of a few years. Not many years after this, she became the wife of Mr. Schoolcraft.

This allusion is made to domestic events, as having a strong bearing upon Mr. Schoolcraft's fitness for the undertaking he has in hand. Mrs. Schoolcraft became a most zealous and efficient coadjutor of her husband in his researches and observations. With a good knowledge of her father's mother-tongue, she combined a thorough knowledge of that of her mother. Through her the Indians, or a select portion of them, were admitted to the fireside of the agent as relations, having all the kindly privileges of such, and throwing off the reserve habitual with them under most connexions with the whites. Affinity smoothed the way to familiarity.

Under these circumstances, Mr. Schoolcraft has been maturing the collections, from which the *Tales* now published are taken, and which will enable him to illustrate their hieroglyphics, music, and poetry; three sources of illustration which are likely to shed much light on the aboriginal mind, tastes, and history, as they strongly mark a race in its primeval stages, and also to illustrate the still higher department of information connected with their language.

In reference to this last branch of Mr. Schoolcraft's inquiries, his "Preliminary Observations" exhibit many hints, which show the important conclusions to which they may lead. There is no doubt, that language is the strongest, the most enduring, affiliation between nations. It may be modified, it may be obscured, until all obvious traces of connexion are lost. Yet something remains to meet the eye of patient and discriminating inquiry, which lends a clue, when no other guide could be found. Mr. Schoolcraft, it appears by the hints we have alluded to, has been enabled through this aid, to ascertain relations between tribes, which congregate them into larger classes than we have heretofore

felt authorized to admit. The present is not the time to follow out the train of thoughts that these hints would lead to. We refer to them now merely to point out the value of the information which the public may receive, provided Mr. Schoolcraft be encouraged to fulfil his plan.

It is proper now to turn our attention to the "Tales," which form the "First Series" of this work. Early in his residence among the Indians, Mr. Schoolcraft became aware of the importance of "oral traditions" in developing the bent of their minds, their habits of thought, their intellectual invention, and force of imagination; and, assisted by the favorable aids which his domestic ties constantly afforded, he began to collect those which arose from accident, as well as a greater number that were elicited by a kindly spirit of inquiry among the occasional inmates of his household. He saw, as he advanced in this work of collection, that the harvest would fully reward the toil of gathering it; that he was unfolding a view of the past, as well as of the present; that, among the vivid sketches of manners and customs, superstitious observances and supernatural agencies, influencing the destinies of individuals, of families, and of tribes, he was catching glimpses of revolutions, physical, moral, and national, of the bearing of which the narrators themselves were probably but imperfectly, if at all, aware. A rude people, who have no records, no literature, no outward monuments, preserve the knowledge of events, whether personal, local, or general, by tradition, that is, by stories, narratives, or tales, which pass down from father to son, ever changing, no doubt, in form and expression, but essentially the same. The main fact, the original event, still glimmers like a spark beneath smouldering embers or ashes.

Regarding these Tales in this light, as the vehicles that have conveyed down, through an unknown series of ages, the recollections of a people, that have no other means of preserving them, Mr. Schoolcraft has not put upon them an undue value; he has not miscalculated the interest they must sooner or later excite; nor is he mistaken in supposing, that they will suggest a thousand inferences to correct past errors, and lead aright for the future.

In the first place, we must endeavour to feel satisfied, that they are genuine, that they have been rendered faith-

fully, or with only such modifications as are inevitable in the course of interpretation, or were required to purge some of them of the grossness which often intermingles with the narratives of a barbarous people. With these exceptions, we have every reason to believe that these Tales are true reflections of the "oral traditions" of the Indians; that nothing has been intentionally added, or taken away, with the exception just mentioned.* If we had not confidence in Mr. Schoolcraft's integrity, which would restrain him from palming upon the public a series of stories as aboriginal, which were mainly of his own invention, there is much internal evidence of their being the unadulterated offspring of untutored minds of savages. They are often disjointed, extravagant, and repulsive, and most of them could, with a little art, have been improved in all these respects, if the plan had been merely to make them the groundwork of an attractive work of imagination. We believe Mr. Schoolcraft, at first, feeling some distrust whether the Tales would be acceptable or popular in their present shape, thought of submitting them to some polished pen, which, like the pencil in respect to many of the Indian portraits that have been given to the public eye, would have detracted from their merit in proportion to the embellishment thrown over them. It is fortunate for the public, that he did not yield to this idea. The standard which we now have for measuring Indian intellect, and judging of Indian imagination and powers of invention, of Indian mythological notions and superstitions, — a true standard, as we are fain to believe, — would have been falsified and erroneous. We should still have been left a prey to the fancies of authors, who could paint the Red man *en beau*, with little chance, among their readers, of discriminating the creatures of the brain from the realities of the forest.

Mr. Schoolcraft observes, that he found those, who were professionally the relaters of tales, were also the depositaries of historical traditions. Hence history and fiction were often wildly intermingled, the landmarks of the former being

* Since we have been engaged in these remarks, we happened to allude to "Peeta Kway, or the Tempest," to an intelligent "half-breed," who had not seen Mr. Schoolcraft's work. She immediately stated, that she had often heard her mother tell the tale, — then repeating substantially the whole of it.

lost in the confusion. But he finds a stamp upon them, whether historical, mythological, fictitious and fanciful, or all combined, which gives a resemblance, wherever heard, by whatever tribe related. This is obvious to the reader, who, in looking over those which come from different tribes, discerns many similar features, which bespeak a common parentage. This suggests an interesting consideration as to the great question of affiliation among the tribes, their arrangement into families or classes, in which the numerous sub-varieties and segregations should be merged. In this respect these Tales have a high value. And that this value might not be impaired by any extraneous ornament, or any attempt at fancied improvement, they have all been left as they were found; their very defects, their occasional wildness and incoherency, and the revolting character of their incidents, being evidences of their genuineness.

Mr. Schoolcraft has many ingenious conjectures as to the antiquity of these Tales. Nearly all of them are undoubtedly of an early origin, as most of their allusions show an ignorance of modern arts and events. With few exceptions, not a hint is found in them that refers to improvements derived from the whites. They belong to the "era of flint arrow-heads, earthen pots, and skin clothes." Nature is untouched; not a tree is cut down. "Tobacco" and "maize" are constantly alluded to, two species of plants which are known to have been peculiar to this hemisphere before its discovery by Columbus. We are surprised at their silence on the subject of "wild rice," which is a grain in certain regions of the Northwest, of incalculable importance to the Indians frequenting the waters where it grows. This omission, combined with other evidences of a higher and more remote Northwestern origin of the principal Tales, may lead hereafter to interesting speculations as to the migration of the Indians, the tendency from the Northwest to the Southeast, which has undoubtedly marked the history of all the tribes now remaining on the Upper Lakes.

Another striking characteristic of these Tales is, that they render all nature social, endowing its various products, its birds, beasts, fishes, and trees, with the faculties of reason and speech, and powers of transformation, that give them peculiar influence over the fortunes of man, for good or for evil, like those that spring from a fellow-being. This propensity

to give animals, and even inanimate objects, such an intimate communion with the human race, belongs to all rude people, but is particularly conspicuous in the red man, as appears in their traditions. Their fewness, sequestered condition, and wandering habits deprive them of most of the social pleasures. The solitary hunter, the hermit of the forest, learns to look on all objects around him as his companions. Many of the animals surpass him in sagacity and in industry, and all of them in providing against the demands of want. This attracts his notice and commands his respect. He even trenches upon them, to appease his hunger, with reluctance, feeling as if the appetite, that impels him to it, had a shade of cannibalism in it. Indeed, there are some of them which he never eats, but in the extremity of famine.

This same leaning upon animals for comfort and social pleasures, makes the Indian also regard the forest, the plains, hills, rivers, all as holding intercourse with him. From a higher sentiment than governed the "melancholy Jaques," who found sermons in trees, heard music in brooks, and moralized upon the whole landscape around him, he literally looks up through nature to a great invisible Being, incomprehensible, and therefore terrible, and worshipped in and under all the sublime manifestations that speak him forth. Unused to that intellectual enjoyment that belongs only to refined society, the Indian finds, in the varieties of the scene abroad, the whispering branches that give him grateful shade, the high hill that affords him a noble prospect, the rapid river that sends him dancing on his wayward journey, a keener enjoyment than any domestic, any social pleasure, within his reach, can afford. Hence his meditations become sublimated; his dreams, wild; his associations, imaginary; and his *Tales* all have the stamp of a moody, excited, visionary state of mind.

It may be thought, that we have dwelt unnecessarily long on these preliminary reflections. We have indeed regarded the *Tales* themselves, independently of such reflections, as of secondary importance. It is true, they have an intrinsic merit, a merit such as a child would discover, who saw or thought nothing of the bearing they have on a most interesting and deep problem, connected with a portion of the human race. Those who have read them, with a constant reference to this bearing, can hardly separate the gratification pro-

ceeding from this source, from that which might otherwise have been felt, in dwelling only on the invention, the wildness, occasional sublimity, severity of satire, high moralizing, and instruction, — for all these are interspersed throughout the Tales, — which the most cursory reader must find in them. After reading the “Arabian Nights’ Entertainments,” and a thousand and one other Oriental Stories, we are inclined to place these Occidental Tales not far behind them in all that does not depend on wealth and refinement for its effect.

We will now turn to the Tales themselves; to see how far we are borne out in this praise. The first is “*Ojeeg Annung*, or the Summer-Maker.” It is an Odjibwa tale, which tribe calls a certain group of stars, in the northern heavens, “*Ojeeg Annung*,” or the “Fisher Stars,” in commemoration of the event to which this tale relates. It was said by a learned man of our country, that our present zones, our present climates, do not correspond with those which prevailed of old; that certain natural phenomena cannot be explained but by supposing, that the position of the earth with respect to the sun has undergone a change. We may suppose, that the Summer-Maker alludes to some such change in the seasons, brought down by Indian tradition. It is a mere glimpse, but such a glimpse as might be supposed to descend through such a shadowy medium.

The Indians rely upon the change of the seasons with a dependence unknown to civilized man, who has a thousand appliances and means to modify and correct its inconvenient or hurtful effects upon his condition. Where “days, and months, and years, pass away,” and still the same “white cloak” covers the form of the earth, they become pinched with want, and finally stiffen and sink into the general mass of insensibility around them. A summer, breaking in upon such a people, so situated, might naturally make an impression that ages could not efface. The distinction, which the wolverine, an animal not much known, receives in this tale, is not unsuited to his brisk and elastic habits and frame.*

The “Celestial Sisters” would be regarded as a beautiful Tale in any language. It is well constructed, evolving

* Michigan will find new reason for being pleased with the *sobriquet*, — Wolverine, — which her offspring now bear.

incidents of a deep interest, sufficiently dashed with extravagance to give them poignancy. The Shawnee's imagination literally roved from earth to heaven in a fine frenzy, and with a finer invention. Waupee, or the White Hawk, is a hermit hunter. Such a separation from all kith and kin is not uncommon in the forest. No evils attendant upon the Indian are particularly aggravated by it. Food, raiment, these do not depend on society, neither do the alleviations of sickness in any efficient degree. If it be slight, his own means are sufficient; if it be mortal, submission is the same in solitude as with the tribe. Waupee, therefore, makes little sacrifice in quitting all, and realizing the poetical wish of Cowper, who longed, in the inspiration or desperation of the moment, "for a lodge," such as Waupee's, "in some vast wilderness, some boundless contiguity of shade."

While thus apart from the world, this hunter discovered, in a remote prairie, the resort of some visitors, who appeared only to touch the earth, not to abide upon it. His curiosity was excited, and, watching from a covert, he soon heard sweet music coming down from the sky, and accompanying a basket, which settled in a "magic ring," of the prairie, and let down twelve beautiful sisters, who began to dance. Though all were beautiful, the youngest (as usual) was the most so. Waupee, accordingly, fell in love with her, and rushed from his hiding-place to woo or seize her; when the whole group, offended at such intrusion, leaped into their basket, and reascended to heaven. Admonished by this failure, Waupee disguised himself, the next day, as an opossum; but this animal appears to have been an object of suspicion even in that early day, and was no sooner seen by the lovely sisters, than they broke up the dance, and reascended as before. He succeeded better as a mouse the next day, and caught his favorite, who was abandoned to her fate by the eleven others, who returned no more to earth. Waupee wins his star-bride (for the sisters were star-maidens) by kindness, and she seems to be satisfied with the pleasures of earth, until a son is born, when the skyey influences begin to draw her upwards again, and she resolves to leave Waupee and his planet. Her preparations are made secretly, and, having her basket all formed, she goes to the magic ring while her husband is hunting, and ascends to the stars with her child, Waupee's ears catching the well-known

sounds, but all too late to arrest his wife and child. He is left disconsolate on earth many years. At last, the same natural longing for native scenes, which led his wife to desert the earth, leads the son, when he grows up, to wish to revisit it. The star-people consent, that the mother and child may descend and bring Waupee up to their bright abodes. Waupee again hears the well-known music, again embraces his wife and child, and accompanies them back to the skies, taking with him a leg, wing, or tail, of any animal which he could kill, as a specimen for his father-in-law. A great feast greets the new comers, when each star present is allowed to take one of the specimens as his own. All approach to make the selection, when suddenly they become transformed into the fowl or beast, whose wing, foot, or tail had been taken up, and scatter themselves wildly through the heavens ; while Waupee, his wife and child, as white hawks, fly down to earth.

We have thus given the entire skeleton of this tale, as a specimen of the general structure and design. It has more than usual unity in its arrangement, but is purely aboriginal in its scope and allusions. It gives a pleasing display of the gentler affections, and shows, that a savage may love "a bright particular star," and win it too. Its principal incidents are most happily made to turn on the *animus revertendi*, the fondness for native scenes, which has great force with the Indians. And the metamorphoses, that take place at the star-feast may easily be supposed to glance at some tradition relative to the constellations, when the bear, the swan, the wolf (dog), fox, &c., were scattered over the firmament.

There is a prominent moral in many of these Tales. Indeed most of them carry home to the heart a useful lesson of life, and were doubtless intended to inculcate it. The "White Feather," a Sioux Tale, furnishes an example of the consequences of forgetting or neglecting wise injunctions, and yielding to the allurements of temptation, that may compare with many an allegory, in which the philosophers of old enforced their teachings of virtue. This "white feather," on the possession of which, like some of the fabled helmets of antiquity, success in difficult contests is made to depend, is won through a dream, when giants of evil are overcome, until one of them, the last to be conquered, assumes the form of a beautiful female, who, although there

had been previous warning of her blandishments, first deludes and then betrays. Her victim loses not only his magic feather, but the form of a man, being changed into that of a dog, or wolf. But the moral does not end here. Practical justice is finally done. The dog suffers, but is adopted by a modest and virtuous woman, whom he serves with skill and fidelity ; and, in due time, he is disenchanted, recovers his feather, and marries his kind patroness.

“Iamo, or the Undying Head,” from the Ottawa, is a true Tale of horrors, — a fine specimen of the raw head and bloody bones. It has, however, much invention, and most strikingly exhibits the Indian mind, its proneness to extravagance, belief in supernatural agencies, and dreaming superstitions. Iamo is doomed to die, but death begins at his feet, and he cunningly directs his head to be cut off just as it reaches the neck ; thus saving his head, with the principle of life in it, to play an important part in the destinies of his friends. The tale is crowded with adventures of the most extraordinary character, all for the sake of winning or preserving a wampum belt. This ornament, among the Indians, is of great value, and often invested with magic power. It has mysterious virtues, records traditions (each bead being a sentence or a chapter), speaks from the dead to the living, and is transmitted down through generations with reverent care. No object can be more regarded, or more coveted. In this tale, a wampum, around the neck of a monstrous she-bear, and guarded by unnumbered obstacles and terrors, has been sought by thousands, who have fallen in the enterprise. Ten brothers renew the trial, and, by courage and stratagem, succeed in getting the belt. But they are pursued by the bear, which passes over whole latitudes at a leap. She would have left “seven-league boots” behind. The brothers dream, and Manitos interpose. Still the pursuit only relents for a moment. At last a dream reveals the “undying head.” It is resorted to, and the she-bear is overcome ; when, on her being beaten into fragments, each fragment turns into a cub, and runs off. Hence the race of bears.

This Tale does not end here. But we have not time to pursue the fate of the ten brothers, who are all killed, and all brought to life again, while the “undying head” is reunited to its trunk, and recovers life and form in all its original vigor and dimensions. Nor have we space to pursue the reflec-

tions which these incidents suggest to Mr. Schoolcraft, as to the aboriginal notions concerning the dead, the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, &c. We do not fully concur with him in the extent of the inferences he is inclined to draw from this tale ; though we believe that the human mind, in all its stages, even when "most uninstructed and unenlightened," is prone to "seek for some moral and physical panacea, which is to introduce happiness to the race." We do, however, infer from this tale, as well as from incidents scattered throughout these volumes, that there are certain impressions stamped on the human mind, bespeaking the common origin of men, and their common subjection to influences arising from certain great moral and physical changes, that no time, no climate, no dispersion, no degradation can wholly obliterate. Enough ever remains to tell the great truth, that "in the beginning" we were all the same.

"Mon-dau-min, or the Origin of Indian Corn," is an expressive and characteristic tale, though meagre in incident, and with no variety. It is the *Cereal* allegory of the West. The Indian is here taught, that the transformation can be effected only by labor and perseverance. There is much beauty of fancy in describing the change. It is to be regretted, that the idle savage does not seem to be more inclined to profit by the lesson it inculcates.

We feel much disposed to dwell on "Manabozho, the great incarnation of the North" ; but he is too important a personage to be compressed within a page or two. He performs a conspicuous part in many of the Tales, — a sort of *factotum* on earth and in heaven. We do not, however, see the force of the expression, "incarnation of the North," unless it be intended to mean more than we can allow ourselves to suppose. Much information respecting the distinctive opinions of the Indian can be derived from the contemplation of this character, which mingles in all things, from the sublime to the ridiculous. His power is comprehensive and minute in its workings, and the delineation of it shows the jumble of ideas which may accumulate in untutored minds.

It is difficult to determine which of the remaining Tales most deserve our notice, in the brief space we have to spare. We are desirous of turning attention to those more particularly, which develope the mythological notions of the Indians,

and the points where they approximate, in these respects, to the early races of man in the old hemisphere. In the "Red Swan," which is one of the most pleasing of the Tales, there is a descent into the regions of the departed, which, without any of the imagery that invests similar visits, described by the ancient poets, clearly shows, that the red man has glimpses of "Pluto's drear abode," where the "good" stand apart from the "wicked"; the one dwelling in "light," and the other under a "dark cloud."

"The Weendigoes" are the Polyphemi of the Western wilds. Ulysses had not more need of courage and stratagem to overcome the giant Cannibal, who gorged himself on his companions, than the hunter, whose wife had been swallowed by a Weendigo "at a mouthful." The revenge is brought about with much fanciful invention, and the incident of the son's birth from the hollow of a tree, in which the bowels of his mother, scattered about by the Cannibal, had been interred, would have furnished Ovid with a good subject for a metamorphosis.

"The Son of the Evening Star," is a neat allegory, and has a new interest in the interpretation which it gives to the name of Michilimackinac, that island of the Lakes, so picturesque, so full of romantic tradition, so marked by the freaks of nature.

There are constant allusions in these Tales to the manner in which birds have received their form or color, beasts their propensity to fatness or leanness, &c.; some of them evincing much fancy, others much drollery. The Indian is accustomed to look abroad on the infinite variety of form and color that marks animate and inanimate nature, and he may be supposed to indulge in many conjectures as to the cause. In one instance the woodpecker, who sat on a bough watching the ineffectual shooting of a warrior at a monster, gives a hint which leads to a successful shot, and, in reward for his service, has a dab of the victim's blood upon his head, which has made woodpeckers red-headed from that time. It is well known, that the duck has an awkward gait, its legs being placed very far behind, and its tail perked up more than is usual with fowls. This malformation the Indian attributes to a kick which the duck once received from the Manabozho upon the hind part, in punishment for having, after the vigilant manner of its kind, kept one eye open, when both were to have been shut. At the same time and

place, the beasts and birds took their character for fatness and leanness, the former being the happy consequence of an early and punctual attendance upon a feast given by Manabozho, and the latter the punishment of tardiness. The first comers served themselves, according to the old rule, first, and ate up all the fat and choice pieces, like the bear and the opossum; while the moose, the martin, and others, the late comers, found only a fare, which has kept them the "lean kine" to this day.

"The Enchanted Moccasins" is a most ingenious tale, in which the moccasins play a part equal to the "magic carpet" of the Orientals. A young hunter has a pair made by his sister, and sets out in pursuit of adventures and a wife. He is directed to a village, where he receives instructions from an old woman, who sends him to another, whence none have thus far returned; but gives him many helps and much admonition. The village is reached, and a lodge is found attached to the trunk of a tall tree, in which two beautiful sisters reside. It is in attempting to reach these fair ones, that so many have failed and been destroyed. The young adventurer immediately makes an effort to climb up to the lodge, but finds that the tree suddenly increases in height, bearing up the lodge with it, as fast as he ascends. Assisted by certain magic bones, with which he had been provided by the old woman, he continues to ascend, while the tree grows, like "Jack's bean-stalk," until it reaches the sky, and can get no higher. Here the young man gets in, and addresses the sisters, and finds, as one speaks, the lodge inclines to ascend, and to descend as the other speaks. He accordingly keeps the latter conversing, until the tree had shrunk down to its usual height, when he kills the sisters and escapes. A hot pursuit is soon made by a powerful brother of the sisters, when, almost overtaken, the young hunter enters into the carcass of a dead moose in the way, and tells his moccasins to make tracks onward, which they do to the end of the earth, the pursuer following them up to that remote point, where alone he is undeceived. Retracing his steps, he finds the suspected carcass gone, and renews the pursuit. At the outset he had been enjoined to eat nothing until he had overtaken and punished his enemy. In violation of this injunction, he was induced, when hungry and faint, to taste some tempting fruit, which was designedly

placed in his path. As soon as he eats, he is overcome, and his victor returns in triumph.

"Puck Wudj Ininee," an Odjibwa tale, speaks of the destruction of all the human species, excepting a boy and a girl, who were asleep when the catastrophe happened. This glimpse of such an event, and the more detailed account of a deluge in "Manabozho," show, that the traditions of the forest shadow faintly forth a time when the earth was drowned, and all but a remnant of its inhabitants became extinct. Manabozho had killed an enormous water-serpent, when the floods rose, pursued him to the highest mountains, and submerged the loftiest tree upon them, in which he had taken refuge, and bathed his chin before they were stayed. While this Tale bespeaks a glimmering knowledge of that awful event in the world's history, which left the ark alone afloat above the general desolation, it discloses also the strange mixture of the ridiculous with the sublime, before alluded to, which marks these aboriginal traditions. As the surface of the earth had been destroyed, it was to be recreated, or restored, and Manabozho does this great work out of the mud clutched by a muskrat, which had died in the attempt, made at Manabozho's request, to dive down to the bottom of the deep, combined with the carcass of a loon. We can hardly smile at these monstrous incongruities, when, while they show us how far the benighted Indian has wandered from the light of truth, they at the same time lead us to believe, that he may once have been near its source.

"Mishosha, or the Magician of the Lakes," is full of necromancy and wonder-working. He is an evil spirit with great power, which he exerts only to injure or destroy. But he has daughters, who would cure as fast as he would kill. The self-moving canoe is an ingenious fancy, and the whole tale is a beautiful illustration of the power of innocence, which can invoke efficacious aids in all extremities, making even the agents of harm minister to its relief. Mishosha is finally circumvented and destroyed near the Lake shore, and becomes a sycamore, a tree that always thrives by the waterside, and is mostly hollow-hearted.*

* This is a Sagana tale, and the Saganas, Mr. Schoolcraft says, are the Seminoles of the Northwest. They are now few in number, and have long been on the skirts of our settlements, but inaccessible to all approaches of civilization. The present chief of the tribe is a true Sagana, as an act of

We would gladly pause upon the "Fire-Plume," in which the fate of Proserpine is reversed, a young man being rapt away from his companion, and borne to a nether region, by two women. His companion, who was asleep at the time, is held responsible for the lost one to his relations, and, according to the custom in such cases, is to pay the penalty by death. A certain time is allowed, near the expiration of which the condemned, while walking on the shore of the lake where the abduction happened, suddenly meets with his friend, who had just come up from the caverns below to revisit his tribe. Returning to them, he relates how he had been taken away by these water-damsels, married to one of them, and permitted to ascend on a short leave of absence. Again he seeks his new relations, and again returns to the surface, his wife accompanying him. Their final departure for the waters is a fine specimen of descriptive writing.

"The day was mild, the sky clear ; not a cloud appeared, nor a breath of wind to disturb the bright surface of the water. The most perfect silence reigned throughout the company. They gazed intently on Wassamo and his wife as they waded out into the water, waving their hands. They saw them go into deeper and deeper water. They saw the waves close over their heads. All at once they raised a loud and piercing wail. They looked again, a red plume, as if the sun had glanced on a billow, marked the spot for an instant, but the Feather of Flames and his wife had disappeared for ever." — Vol. II. p. 150.

These desultory remarks may justify the opinion, that there is evidence of intellectual power in the Indians, such as they have not heretofore been supposed to possess. The common impression is, that they are of a saturnine disposition, disinclined to cheerful imaginations, and apt to look on all things around them with little or no sympathy. We have also been accustomed to regard them as exercising the mind only so far as the few practical concerns of life required. War, the chase, these alone were supposed to arouse them, to excite and employ their faculties. But we now

his, which occurred not many years since, will show. In some quarrel among his tribe, he was wounded in the side, so that his liver obtruded through the wound. He seized the protruding part with one hand, while with the other he cut it off; then deliberately cooked and ate it. He is still living, remarkable for his sternness and truly Indian character.

see, that they have lively fancies, which can invest bird and beast, and even inanimate objects, with social qualities, that may surround them, even in solitude, with many of the charms of life. The stirring excitements of war and the chase are still paramount ; but these Tales show, that there may be something to enliven the wigwam fire ; that privations, pinching want, and piercing cold, may all be rendered endurable by traditions of Manitos, of lucky and unlucky loves, or of more mysterious hints of mighty agencies, that have convulsed the earth and changed the heavens. It is pleasing to believe, that this is the case ; that there are happy methods of softening affections which we feared were unchangeably obdurate, and that untaught and grovelling minds may occasionally be led into deep thought, giving them, though all unconsciously, perhaps, a new enlargement and elevation.

We have made only one short extract from these Tales, as our object has not been with the *manner*, but the *matter*. We have regarded the former only so far as it affected the latter. All externals must be considered as belonging in a great degree to the editor. The aboriginal dress is necessarily lost, or nearly so. The utmost simplicity of rendering should have been the aim. All elaborate language would seem to be a departure from the original meaning. That meaning alone it is desirable to see ; the ideas, as nearly as possible, as they came from the Indian's lips. Strictness of adherence to the plain sense has no doubt governed the manner in most instances. Whenever it has not, when there has been an indulgence in fine writing merely, the graft, however ornamental, betrays itself. Most of the poetry is smooth in versification, and of appropriate and striking imagery. Some of it is quite beautiful ; but it seems to be misplaced in proportion as it is excellent. It leads to a distrust of the context. But these embellishments are not thrown over those tales which have the most important bearing on the question of Indian intellect, variety of thought, and vigor of fancy. The proofs of these qualities stand out in the main tales with no shade of doubt resting upon them. And for these we are indebted to the long, persevering, and discriminating labors of Mr. Schoolcraft, who, we most ardently hope, may be encouraged to persevere in them.
